

End Tidal CO₂ (EtCO₂) Monitoring

Applies to:

P Paramedic

Clinical Indications:

1. Capnography shall be used when available with the use of all advanced airway procedures and as required by treatment guidelines.

Procedure:

1. Attach capnography sensor to the advanced airway or any other oxygen delivery device, including bag-valve mask and nasal cannula.
2. Note that EtCO₂ level and waveform changes. Values shall be documented in the EHR.
3. The capnometer shall remain in place and be monitored throughout prehospital care and transport.
4. Any loss of EtCO₂ detection or waveform may indicate an airway problem and should be immediately addressed and thoroughly documented.
5. Document the procedure and results in the EHR.

Notes:

1. EtCO₂ readings may be unreliable if the patient is in shock or has poor perfusion.
2. Normal EtCO₂ levels range from 35 – 45, but this may vary based on the patient's underlying respiratory and metabolic status.
3. EtCO₂ levels that rise from a normal baseline to or above 40 generally indicates hypoventilation is occurring.
4. Patient stimulation, use of a BVM, or use of Naloxone may be appropriate based on the situation.

